

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4-16 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 2, 3, and 17, have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 4 under §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 5,047,677 to Mineta et al. (hereinafter Mineta). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because Mineta fails to disclose all of the elements as set forth and arranged in the claims.

Claim 1 sets forth, *inter alia*, a bearing unit wherein a width of a reduced diameter part of a shaft is longer than an entire width of a raceway surface on an inner ring fitted on the shaft.

By way of non-limiting example, with reference to Fig. 2, one embodiment consistent with that set forth in claim 1 is a bearing unit wherein a width 2L of a reduced diameter part 23a of a shaft 23 is longer than an entire width of a raceway surface 27 on an inner ring 25b fitted on the shaft 23. Also, see page 26, lines 23-25.

In contrast to that set forth in claim 1, Mineta discloses a reduced diameter portion having a width less than that of the raceway surface on the ring mounted to the shaft.

For at least any of the above reasons, Mineta fails to anticipate Applicants' claim 1. Likewise, this reference fails to anticipate dependent claim 4.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 13, 14, and 16, under §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mineta. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because Mineta fails to teach or suggest all of the elements as set forth and arranged in the claims.

Claim 13 sets forth a bearing unit comprising, *inter alia*, a shaft and a plurality of rolling bearings interference fitted on the shaft, wherein a recessed portion is formed in an outer peripheral surface of the shaft, has an outer diameter smaller than an inner diameter of one of the inner rings, and has a predetermined width in the axial direction, further wherein the predetermined width is larger than an entire width of a raceway surface of one of the inner rings.

By way of non-limiting example, with reference to Fig. 18, one embodiment consistent with that set forth in claim 13 is a bearing unit comprising, *inter alia*, a shaft 340 and a plurality of rolling bearings 311 interference fitted on the shaft 340, wherein a recessed portion 340a is formed in an outer peripheral surface of the shaft 340, has an outer diameter smaller than an inner diameter of one of the inner rings 312, and has a predetermined width in the axial direction, further wherein the predetermined width is larger than an entire width of a raceway surface 312a of one of the inner rings 312.

In contrast to that set forth in claim 13, Mineta discloses a recessed portion that has an axial width smaller than that of a raceway surface on a bearing ring mounted to the shaft.

For at least any of the foregoing reasons, Mineta fails to render obvious Applicants' claim 13. Likewise, this reference fails to render obvious the dependent claims 14 and 16.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 5-12 are allowed, and that claim 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, to further prosecution, Applicants have rewritten claim 15 in independent form.

Conclusion

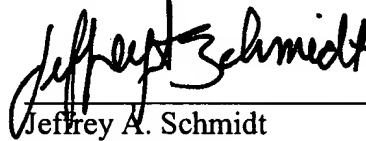
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Appln No. 09/955,171

Atty Dkt No. Q66275

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeffrey A. Schmidt
Registration No. 41,574

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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